

**REMARKS**

Claims 11-14 are now pending in the application. Claims 15-24 are withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants have amended the claims to make them definite.

Claims 11-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bunkou et al. in view of Roh, Masui et al., and Polkinghorne.

Applicants have amended claim 11 to more clearly define the invention. Claim 11 recites that a leased wire communication line, such as that shown as numeral 9 in fig. 1, is provided for connecting the outdoor units (such as 1a-1c) with the system controller (for example 7) and the bridges (for example 4a-4c). each of the bridges is connected to a second power line (such as 15) supplying electric power to at least one of the indoor units (such as 2a, 2b . . . 2l). The communication between the bridge and the outdoor units is made via the leased wire communication line, while the communication between the bridge and the indoor unit is made via the power line, such as the other second power line 6a-6c.

The control information is exchanged mutually between the outdoor unit and the bridges via the leased wire communication line, between one of the

bridges and the adapter via the second power line, and between the adapter (such as 600a-600d in Fig. 8) and one of the indoor units via the leased wire communication line (such as 10). The leased wire communication line (such as 9) is provided only between the outdoor unit and the bridge, the wiring work for the leased wire communication line is easy and simple to perform, and the cost for the wiring is thus reduced.

The features of the circuit claimed in the present invention, particularly as recited in claim 11, are not described in any of the references cited in the Office Action. In particular, Bunkou discloses in Fig. 1 that the communication between the bridge 6 and the outdoor unit 7 is made via the power line 3. No leased wire communication line is shown in Fig. 1 of Bunkou. Figure 4 of Bunkou shows a leased communication line 13 that is disposed between the outdoor unit 7 and the indoor unit 8 for communication therebetween. However, the leased communication line 13 has the wireless signal transmitters 12 which transmit and receive the wireless signal to/from the transreceivers 11 of the outdoor unit 7 and the indoor unit 8. Thus, what is shown in Fig. 4 of Bunkou is not a true wired leased communication line, but a wireless communication line, which is different from what is claimed.

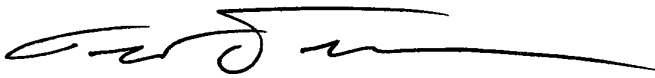
In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments, applicants respectfully submit that claim 11 is allowable. Claims 12-14 depend from an allowable claim, and at least for that reason are also submitted to be allowable.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #101077.53988US).

Respectfully submitted,

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